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FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1565
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 7831
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7561
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1271
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 8680
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2490
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9326
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0521

C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 005828

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR: PRM (EKELLEY)
BANGKOK FOR: POL/REF (JADLER)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/13/2016

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SUBJECT: LOGJAM OVER ROHINGYAS RESOLVED WITH SIGNING OF
SUB-AGREEMENT

REF: DHAKA 05709

Classified By: A/DCM D.C. McCullough, reason para 1.4(d)

11. (C) The annual sub-agreement between UNHCR and the GOB regarding UNHCR's work in Rohingya refugee camps was finally signed on September 7 (reftel). UNHCR Country Representative Pia Pritz-Phiri credited Ambassador and PRM A/S Sauerbrey's recent visit to Cox's Bazar, and our follow-up meetings with the GOB ministry that handles refugees, for helping to break the nine-month logjam in getting the agreement approved.

12. (C) Under its memorandum of understanding with the GOB, UNHCR funds operations at the two official Rohingya camps near Cox's Bazar. Each year a sub-agreement is signed specifying funding for the year. According to UNHCR, the controversy this year resulted from UNHCR's insistence that "excessive" overhead costs of over 50 percent be reduced. UNHCR also requested a reduction in the number of GOB officials whose salaries UNHCR paid.

13. (C) In a meeting on September 4 to follow up on A/S Sauerbrey's visit in August, Syed Jaglul Pasha, Head of the Rohingya Refugee Cell at the Ministry for Food and Disaster Management, assured us that the sub-agreement would be signed by the end of the week. Pasha also confirmed that Shoyebur Rahman, the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner responsible for the Cox's Bazar camps (reftel), had retired and been replaced in an acting capacity by a Ministry official from Dhaka.

14. (C) We expressed the hope that this personnel change, coupled with the signing of the sub-agreement, would signal the start of better cooperation between the Ministry and UNHCR on the ground. Pasha agreed, and replied positively to our request that the Ministry work with UNHCR to begin repairing dilapidated and collapsing refugee shelters in the camps as soon as possible.

15. (C) UNHCR's Pritz-Phiri told us on September 12 that UNHCR field staff have had productive meetings with the new RRRRC and is hopeful that UNHCR and the GOB can finally start moving forward in addressing concerns in the camps. She is planning a briefing soon for diplomats to update them on UNHCR's plans now that the sub-agreement has been signed.
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